

Fact Sheet, Cruiseline Industry

- In the fall of 1999, the FL Department of Environmental Protection and representatives of the cruiseline industry, began discussions regarding environmental management practices and goals of cruise ships. Those discussions culminated in the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding between the department and the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association, on March of 2000.
- The MOU addresses the management of solid wastes, hazardous waste, and wastewater. The MOU contains three significant goals:
 1. Develop a timetable for the implementation of an environmental policy that establishes and requires the discharge of identified wastewaters OUTSIDE Florida's territorial waters.
 2. Work with the EPA to develop a uniform national practice for the assigning of an EPA ID number to the generator of hazardous wastes which will recognize the unique aspects of cruise vessel operation and its multiple itineraries.
 3. The MOU recognized that US Coast Guard is the primary federal agency with a responsibility to examine cruise vessels for the proper management of waste streams. To that end, we included a goal to work with the Coast Guard to develop guidelines for inspection of waste management by cruise vessels.
- Last summer, the cruiseline industry met with the department, the Coast Guard, and representatives of the Port Authorities to discuss implementation of the MOU. Some of the issues that require further discussion include the availability of infrastructure such as pump out facilities to handle wastewater. Port Canaveral has committed to initiate a preliminary engineering study for installing pump out facilities for a direct discharge to the central sanitary system. The Port authority has requested information including total quantities of blackwater and graywater to be discharged. DEP will be developing checklists for US Coast Guard use during inspection; development of a protocol for emergency discharges to FL waters; and a protocol with the Coast Guard for communication between the agencies. We also would like to develop some form of recognition for those cruiselines that are meeting the goal of no discharges of wastewaters to FL waters.
- One of the areas that require further discussion is the availability of resources from the US Coast Guard to conduct inspections of wastewater discharges. It is our understanding that traditionally, the Coast Guard has not been heavily involved in aspects dealing with wastewater discharges, other than ensuring that the appropriate marine sanitation equipment for blackwater has been installed.
- Last fall, the EPA held a series of public workshops about discharges from cruise ships. EPA is looking at the need to revise the federal regulations to address such discharges.